

FLOATING BEACON.

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THE
FLOATING BEACON,
OR,
NORWEGIAN WRECKERS:

A MELO DRAMA,

In Two Acts.

BY EDWARD BALL,

Fitzball
Author of "*Waverly—Fortunes of Nigel—Peveril of the Peak—Joan of Arc—Barber of Bagdad—Inkeeper of Abbeville—Three Hunchbacks—Tread Mill—Thalaba, the Destroyer,*" &c., &c."

CORRECTLY PRINTED FROM THE MOST APPROVED
ACTING COPY

WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE COSTUME, CAST OF THE
CHARACTERS, ENTRANCES AND EXITS, RELATIVE
POSITIONS, AND THE WHOLE OF THE
STAGE BUSINESS;

To which are added,
PROPERTIES AND DIRECTIONS, AS PERFORMED IN THE

PRINCIPAL THEATRES.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SURREY, 1824.

ANGERSTOFF,	<i>Captain of the Beacon,</i>	Mr. H. Kemble.
MAURICE,	} <i>his Companions,</i>	{ Mr. Lloyd.
ORMOLOFF,		
WEIGNSTADT,	<i>an old Fisherman,</i>	Mr. Loveday.
FREDERIC,	<i>a supposed Orphan,</i>	Mr. Rowbotham.
JUNK,	<i>a British Sailor,</i>	Mr. Gallot.
	<i>Sailors, Marines, &c.</i>	
MARIETTE,	<i>Woman of the Beacon,</i>	Mrs. W. Clifford.
CHRISTINE,	<i>Weignstadt's Daughter,</i>	Miss Healy.

COSTUME.

ANGERSTOFF.—Black wig and cap, (a-la banditti,) crimson jacket, with tabs, trimmed with black,—brass clasps,—broad brass belt,—blue and white broad striped shirt,—white petticoat trowsers,—dark blue stockings,—brass buckles,—buff leather shoes.

MAURICE.—Brown jacket trimmed with black,—black belt,—red trunks,—brass loops,—russet or black fisherman boots,—red and white striped shirt,—dark blue cap,—black curled hairs.

ORMOLOFF.—Same as Maurice, in other colours.

WEIGNSTADT.—Fisherman's rough blue jacket,—broad hat,—covered with black oil skin,—gray bald headed wig,—Guernsey vest, blackneck cloth,—petticoat trowsers,—russet belt,—with brass buckles,—fisherman's boots above knees.

FREDERIC.—Blue tabbed jacket, trimmed with red—petticoat trowsers, trimmed with red,—black morocco belt,—light blue and white shirt,—red stockings, with black clocks,—buff shoes,—blue cap, bound with red trimming.

This dress is generally more modernized, but not so picturesque.

JACK JUNK.—A Sailor's dress,—glazed Man-a-War hat, with an eagle painted on the front,—black belt,—brass buckle,—the rest left to fancy.

MARINES.—Blue military coatees,—Blue trowsers,—red stripes down the seams—military caps, with red pom-poons, muskets, &c.

MARIETTE.—Slate coloured elderly dress, with red drapery,—hair dishevelled,—dress and drapery trimmed with black,—black belt and brass buckle round waist.—The whole wild and picturesque.

CHRISTINE.—Blue boddice,—large hanging sleeves—buff petticoat with black and blue trimming,—blue stockings,—black shoes and neat buckles.

THE FLOATING BEACON.

ACT 1.

SCENE 1.—*The Sea Coast at Bergen, with Boats, and Shipping in the distance,—Cottage, s. E. R. H.—a small Public house—s. E. L. H.—sign of the Ship, practicable boat near the shore L. H.—Curtain rises to lively music. CHRISTINE discovered at the cottage window. JACK JUNK and Sailors enter from the Inn.*

Chorus, Junk and Sailors.

Freight, brothers, freight, aboard repair,
The sea runs smooth, the wind sets fair;
The canvass spread, away we go!
Huzza, huzza, for England, ho!

Christine (at Window.)

Stay, pri'thee stay, 'tis almost night,
Sure 'twere time at morning's light,—
With day break, say, should storms assail,
Were it not best, to meet the gale,

Jack. Avast there, pretty maid, I pray,
Blow high, blow low, still no delay,—
Despite the tear, in your black eye,
Your sweetheart now, must cry, good bye.

Chris. Sailor, sailor, whence this speed,
Mischance, in yonder clouds I read;
The canvass spread, at mornings's glow,
And then, huzza, for England ho!

Jack and Sailors.

Blow high, blow low,
Still we must go.

Chris. Ah, no, no, no.

Jack. Three cheers, three cheers.

Chris. Ah no, no, no.

Three cheers, three cheers, for England ho!

Enter WEIGNSTADT, from the cottage, R. H. as CHRISTINE retires from the window.

Weign. So, my friend, all's prepared, and you are for getting aboard the sloop with our Frederic to night, ha!

Jack. Never let the wind slip, that's our motto on board the Eagle sloop, for she's a ticklish lady like the most of her sex, d'ye see, and won't come to hand just when she's wanted, we watch for her, not she for us; but where's this young spark of yours, that means to share our voyage to old England,—his heart don't begin to fail him, does it?

Weign. Fail him! no, no! he's too brave a lad for all that; he's no fair weather chicken, not he indeed. I can assure you, that his hand, young as he is, has saved many a poor wretch from a watery grave. Why I've known him, on a dark night, when the sea ran mountains high, at the cry of distress, leap into the boat and off he was like a shot to assist the unfortunate.

Jack. What country is the lad?

Weign. You know he's not my son! I should think him English.

Jack. Think him English! Damme I'm sure of it.

Weign. (*Eagerly.*) How! what is't you say! English! why?

Jack. Because, there never yet was a true Englishman, that thought of his own danger, when he could save another in the hour of distress.

Weign. I've heard as much before Jack, and I hope that the English may ever do any thing abroad to disgrace the glorious name they have earn'd at home.

Jack. They never will, they never shall—damme they never can.

Weign. Ah, it's now sixteen years, come St. Mary's night, since a terrible storm took place off this coast, an English ship was wrecked; not a soul escaped—all perished—no, I forget—not all, this boy of mine, whom I call Frederic, came floating to shore on a raft.—Well, I

took the child home he was too young to be sensible of the peril he had just encountered,—at first he would cry for his poor mother—which was the only word he could utter—what the deuce is the matter with my old eyes, the sand has blown into them I think, to make 'em water thus?

Jack. The sand has blown into my young eyes I think for the pumps are all at work like—Well, you gave the youngster a birth—ha!

Weign. To be sure I did, d'ye think I could have the heart to turn my back on an innocent babe, whose only parent perhaps perished in a wat'ry grave?—No, no, though no Englishman, Jack, I had lived long enough in the world to know, there is no blessing so delightful, as that which centre in the performance of a good action!

Jack. Bravo, my old boy, damme, if you are *not* an Englishman, I'm sure you must be his first cousin.

Weign. Ha, ha, ha! well to cut the matter short, the boy turn'd out a good son to me—he is now the staff the pride of my age—and when he returns from this voyage to England, which is solely for the purpose of endeavouring to learn something of his family, I intend that he should marry my daughter Christine, they love each other tenderly, and all I have shall be theirs—but they are here.

Enter FREDERIC and CHRISTINE, from the cottage, R. H.

Fred. Now, my dear father, I am ready to embark; ere dawn, the vessel will be under weigh.

Jack. Aboard—aboard! yo—ho!

Weign. Heaven's blessing attend you, my boy; in fulfilling this cherish'd wish of your heart, you'll not fail to return with the same captain and by the same vessel.

Fred. O, doubt it not; my inquiries will be brief and to the purpose I hope;—should I succeed and prove the son of respectable parents, it will be the better for you and my dear Christine—but it grows late.

Chris. You are sure, you'll not forget us in your absence, Frederic.

Fred. Forget you, Christine, can you love me and ask that question,—could I cease to remember that to your father, I owe, even life itself? Farewell, farewell; what-

ever scenes pass before my eyes, still, Christine, I shall turn with new delight, to these grateful shores, and to the happy fisherman's hut on the banks of Norway! Farewell, farewell.

Weign. Prosperity, my boy, prosperity.

Jack. Avast there, my masters,—aboard, aboard, for England, ho!

[*Music as they enter the boat* L. H. *Christine and Weinstadt exit into the cottage,* R. H.

SCENE II.—*Interior of WEINSTADT'S Cottage.—Enter CHRISTINE, L. H.*

Chris. Heigho! in the absence of my beloved Frederic, I am afraid the moments will pass heavily; nobody to express one's apprehensions to when the sea roars, and the wind whistles though the pine branches at night; and if I turn pale or tremble, father will only blow a huge whiff of tobacco from his pipe, and cry nonsense, all's fair enough over head?—But Frederic! he was always so kind and so affectionate! with him—even the fisherman's cottage possess'd the peace and happiness of a palace.

SONG.

When rude gales are blowing,
And storms overcast—
When raindrops are flowing,
Thro' tempest and blast.—
O, then my own true love,
Thou'lt think upon me,
And the fisherman's hut—
On the cliff of the sea.

When lightning is flashing,
And death strides the main;
Where breakers are lashing,
And groans burst in vain,
O, then my own true love,
Thou'lt think upon me,
And the fisherman's hut,
On the cliff of the sea.

Enter WEINSTADT, L. H.

Weign. (*Hastily.*) Surely the boat will put back, I observed nothing, till this instant.

Chris. You are agitated, father, what is it you apprehend?

Weign. Nothing, child, nothing!

Chris. Gracious heaven, you tremble too!—I hear! 'tis the wind that howls so fearfully—one of our sudden-storms rising—is it not so—father—speak.

Weign. I thought the clouds seem'd unexpectedly over-casting the heavens; it is nothing but my conceit,—I am old, Christine, and apt to forbode—'tis nothing.

[*Thunder.*

Chris. Ah, father! do you call that nothing? Frederic cannot have reach'd the vessel—the boat will be upset.

Weign. Nonsense! set a woman's fears afloat, and it runs nine knots an hour—why, how terrified the girl looks!—if there were aught to apprehend should'nt I be alarm'd think you?

Chris. Yes, father, and you are so; don't attempt to deceive me, by a show of fortitude which you do not possess; that you should study to disguise your terrors does but magnify mine—O, Frederic! Frederic! why leave us 'till day break—(*Thunder*) agony, another crash.

Weign. The boy has ventured to sea in much worse weather!

Chris. Ah! he is too brave! hark!

Weign. What was that?

Chris. There, it sounds again! I hear it thro' the hollow pauses of the storm, 'tis the cry of some dying, drowning wretch, that calls on heaven for protection! listen, how the rain and hail patters against the casement.

Weign. Silence, I can endure this suspense no longer—it grows dark—awfully dark! Should they be thrown upon the sand bank, they are lost!—Open the window, see whether the lantern of the Floating Beacon be not lighted yet,—that alone can warn them of the danger. (*Hail.*) Stay!—I'll open the casement myself, you are too tremulous. (*Music.*) *As he opens the casement—a gun is fired.*

Chris. Ah! mark how the sea rages! there—there's the boat in distress!—they fired a signal of despair!—O, Frederic!

Weign. But see, the lanterns of the Beacon are lit!—now they'll pull the boat towards land,—bring me my sea cloak—and a toreh—this way, girl,—I'll to the rocks and watch—this way!

[Exit, L. H.]

Chris. (*In tears.*) O Frederic! dear, lost Frederic.

[Exit, L. H.]

(*Thunder and Storm continues.*)

SCENE III.—*The deck of the Floating Beacon; a mast with rigging conducting to the lanterns of the vessel which are lighted; Angerstoff sleeping on the hatchway, casks, ropes, &c. a glass door, U. E. L. H. opening into the cabin. (Music.) Marriette enters wildly from cabin, with a lamp in her hand, and stands for an instant in the centre of the Stage, listening to the tempest.*

Mar. Another, and another dreadful flash succeeds, the breakers bent fearfully against these rocks as if to usher in new victims, to the sanguinary assassins of this desolate Beacon, the beacon of death!—the abode of horror and despair!—(*Puts down the lamp.*)—Angerstoff asleep—gracious heaven!—can the guilty sleep thus in the hour of tempest and destruction, while I, the distracted victim of another's crime, wildly frantically press my scorched brow in all the anguish of untold, unutterable woe! O Deity! when wilt thou hearken to the prayer of Mariette? from the dark, deep waters, when, when release her tortured soul from the miseries of hated existence?

FREDERIC appears clinging to the side of the vessel amidst the tempest.

Fred. Help—help—help!

Mar. Horror! another human voice—silence, miserable youth, or you are lost, plunge again into the deep ocean, rather than enter here—the waters raging furiously are less merciless, than the monsters of the Floating Beacon.

[*Music.*—*Frederic* appears sinking with exhaustion.]

Fred. I alone am safe, all else sunk in the boat,—merciful providence—I—oh!

[*Attempting to enter falls across side of vessel.*]

Mar. Alas, alas! he is for ever lost, poor hapless boy!

Music. *Marriette goes cautiously to Angerstoff, takes the lamp from a barrel and observes that he is still asleep, then approaches cautiously to Frederic and raises him up in great agitation, he slowly recovers, and supplicates, she motions him in hurried alarm to summon his strength and begone, they come forward, he points to a wound which he has received in his forehead; and endeavouring to rise, sinks at her feet.*

Fred. I am exhausted,—the rugged edges of these rocks, have lacerated my brow—I bleed—I am strengthless—pity!—

[*Music.*—*As Marriette gazes on him, Angerstoff awakes, listens and pretends to sleep.*

Mar. Wounded—alas—alas!—you are young and prepossessing, doubtless you have hearts akin to your own in affection, you have friends whom you love and who love you tenderly—ah!—if you would ever behold them again—summon your strength, and quit this vessel.

Fred. Yes, I have friends who idolize my very name they will seek me here—they will—

Mar. Find only your murdered corse,—unless indeed—meagre poverty has so marked you for its own, that you possess not the least pittance to gratify the sordid grasp of remorseless guilt; even then, perhaps, your blood—yours,—may wantonly be given to dye the yelling waves.

Fred. Who is it shall dare to dispossess me of existence?

Mar. (*Cautiously.*) There are wretches so lost even in this Beacon.

Fred. And you—you exist here?

Mar. True, I do exist here as the slave of a demon, abide beneath the influence of an abhorred master; O God! how often have I prayed for death, that my blood, mine—could be shed upon the ebbing tide, and bear to you distant shore a crimson testimony of wrongs, never—never to be effaced! a moment only is left me—here, on the dark vessel's deck! amid the roaring tempest and the howling waters! hear me, heaven sent stranger, relate a tale of maddening, heart dissolving woes!—hear it and fly forever to save yourself—if not to avenge my wrongs!—I am—

Ang. (*Rising.*) How now, Mariette, begone—stranger, whence this intrusion?

Fred. The boat in which I lately quitted the shore, was upset in the storm, I struggled with the overwhelming waters till I reached your vessel, a rope served me to ascend—I demand your hospitality.

Ang. You shall have it.

Mar. (*Hastily.*) No, no, no!

Ang. (*Furiously.*) I say yes! Shall I, on such a night, pitiless as the storm itself, refuse shelter to the lone oppressed wanderer. Ha, ha, ha! heed not my wife, young man, she's mad—aye and mischievous in the bargain, but these women have all perverse and hard hearts, where they take a distaste.

Mar. Monster!—heed him not, youth heed him not, he smiles, while his treacherous fingers wrestle with the secret poignard, intended for the breast of innocence.

Fred. What am I to understand, I require merely shelter and compassion.

Mar. Seek it then, in the flood from which you have so recently escaped rather than here.—He that dashes bravely down the roaring cataract may escape with life, but he that leisurely confides in the oath of a heartless murderer, like that—

Ang. Maniac! you forget yourself.

Mar. Is that wonderful, when heaven seems to forget me?

Ang. Mark what impiety—you are *convinced* now of her madness.

Fred. To me her wildness implies, a broken heart; you know her grief and can best speak to the truth of my conjecture. From my heart I pity her misfortunes, be they what they may.

Mar. Pity, pity! hear that, ye raging winds, hear it and be still!—hear it, ye loud thunders, ye darkly gathering clouds, and bid it dissolve your elemental horrors to the blue calm of one expanding æther! 'tis the first accent of compassion that for sixteen years has lit upon my desolated soul—it makes me weep—it—bless thee, poor boy,—bless thee, bless thee, thou shalt mix with angels presently!

Ang. (*To Fred.*) You hear, you are convinced.

Fred. Too well! but is there no aid.

Mar. Aid for Marriette, O no! had there been aid, human or divine for struggling innocence, think you that when the dying cries of my lost murdered husband, cleft the horrid roof of this floating charnel house, it would not have burst forth from the very depths of creation—think you—

[*She seems choaked with grief.*]

Ang. (*Whistles.*) Her distraction becomes intolerable.

Enter ORMOLOFF and MAURICE, U. E. L. H.

Take away Mariette—she rages!

Mar. (*As they seize her.*) Unloose me wretches! there's blood upon your hands, I know it, 'tis Malvern's blood! (*rushes out.*) Horrible—horrible!

Fred. (*Aside.*) Malvern! that name, 'tis familiar to my ear,—Malvern—can it be, (*takes a bracelet from his breast and gazes on it.*) 'tis the same.

Ang. Follow her not, she'll not busy herself about the domestic concerns—we shall hear no more of her to day at least; come, young man, you need refreshment, 'tis here at hand.

Fred. The storm abates, if you have a boat I would to shore immediately, or my friends—

Ang. You, familiar to this coast, and not know that convicts like me, transported to this vessel, are condemned perpetually to trim the beacon light, and to quit this place of exile but with life?

Fred. But I am no convict.

Ang. True, but as we have no boat, you must remain with us 'till the government men bring us our supplies of food and oil.

Fred. Which will be in—

Ang. In three days—console yourself, you are welcome.

Fred. (*Aside.*) I like not the appearance of these men—that mysterious woman—the same name!—Malvern!—and—

Ang. Come, come, seat yourself—bring forward the table there.

Fred. The fishing boats are forbid to approach this beacon?

Ang. True, once here they are determined not to let us escape—eat—you seem exhausted.

Fred. (*Seating himself.*) I thank you—I am so—but—

Ang. You belong to these parts, I suppose?

Fred. You are right.

Ang. I hope you lost nothing material in being upset.

Fred. Nothing—the dearest treasure I depend on is still safe, here in my breast.

Ang. A treasure!

Fred. Yes—to me an invaluable one.

Ang. It consists of—

Fred. A coral bracelet and clasp.

Ang. A—What?

MARIETTE enters, U. E. L. H.

Fred. A bracelet and clasp.

Ang. Is that all?

Fred. Every thing!

Ang. Um! I suppose it is a gift of your sweet-heart; or what have you to do with such a childish bauble?

Fred. A few words will explain—you remember perhaps, that fifteen or sixteen years ago, an English ship was wrecked off these rocks.—

[MAURICE and ORMOLOFF listen and draw near, MARIETTE at the mention of "English ship," seems almost convulsed, the rest are too intent to notice her agitation.

Ang. A—a——an English ship! aye—yes, I recollect the circumstance—it was a fearful storm, not a soul escaped.

Fred. Yes, there was one escaped, one, who has never been able to recount the story of that dreadful night.

Ang. (*Aside.*) He means Mariette—you are certain what you speak is true—one escaped?

Fred. Quite certain; that one, was myself!

Ang. Yourself!

Fred. Yes, I was an infant; and this bracelet which I mentioned to you, was found about my neck—and the clasp had on it the name of—

Ang. What—what?

Fred. Malvern.

Mar. Malvern! merciful heaven!

[*She falls senseless on the ground.*

Ang. Mariette here again—we shall be betrayed—drag her into the cabin and lock the door! (to Fred.) you'll excuse this singular conduct.

[*Mariette carried into cabin. U. E. L. H.*

Fred. It requires no forgiveness.

Ang. Seat yourself, I must arrange for your accommodation below, make yourself at home, in an instant I'll return.

[*Music, he exits, s. E. R. H. beckoning to MAURICE and ORMOLOFF, who having locked the cabin door and thrown the keys on a cask follow him.*

Fred. What am I to think of these people! the chilling deportment of the man—the singular phrenzy of his wife—both were alike dreadfully agitated at mention of the name on this bracelet—a mystery seems attached to their conduct, which I vainly struggle to comprehend.—They have locked,—she comes to the window—'tis me she beckons—the keys left on yon cask—I'll speak to her, there must be danger or.—

[*Music, he goes to the door of cabin, unlocks it and MARIETTE is about to enter, when ANGERSTOFF speaks without.*

Ang. (*Without.*) All's right! all's right!

[*Music MARIETTE gives FREDERIC a paper, and hastily closes the door, he replaces the keys, returns to his seat and reads!*

Fred. "Be on your guard! drink and you are lost, seem to sleep"—but—still I do not comprehend—I'll—

Enter ANGERSTOFF and the others, s. E. L. H.

Ang. All is well arranged, you'll sleep soundly at night I'll warrant.

Fred. (*Aside.*) As if I were in my grave perhaps—Pshaw, what motive can they have for my death. (to Ang.) You are very good, sir.

Ang. Not at all, I'm glad you are safe with us—but you didn't finish your story, I think—however, we'll have a flask of wine first—a hearty draught will keep out the cold.

[*ORMOLOFF indicates, as he brings forward wine, that something is misplaced, ANGERSTOFF feels in his elt, then points*

hastily to a chest, MAURICE takes out a phial, which FREDERIC observes.

Fred. (Aside.) That phial, what dreadful secrecy is this!

Ang. Now Ormoloff fill the cup (*takes wine into which the contents of the phial has been administered.*) Here, friend, drink and refresh yourself, you are fatigued—drink

Fred. After you, if you please.

Ang. Another cup there, Ormoloff, for me; we'll drink together—come—come.

As they are about to seat themselves, MARIETTE comes to the window.

Mar. Angerstoff! Angerstoff!

[*Angerstoff crosses, shows a dagger to Mariette, and threatens.*

Ang. Silence, madwoman,—or—

[*Frederick changes the cups on the cask, so as to be seen by Mariette.*

Fred. Providence, I thank thee, now to change the cups.

Mar. (Wildly.) Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit.*

ANGERSTOFF returns.

Ang. Let us shake hands and be friends; your health.

Fred. And yours.

[*Both drink.*

Ang. Ha, ha, ha!

Fred. You are merry.

Ang. 'Tis the strength of the wine.

Fred. Its effects are powerful—nay, instantaneous, or I am exhausted with fatigue.

Ang. I perceive you are overcome—compose yourself a little, it will recover you—we'll leave you for half an hour.

Fred. Thank you.

Ang. (To Ormoloff.) Mariette's locked in the chamber?

Orm. Yes—here are the keys.

Music, they retire, 2. E. R. H. FREDERIC pretends to sleep, and they return with daggers.

Ang. He sleeps! all's right! I tell you he has heard too

much of Mariette's story, should he quit the Beacon alive, we are lost—he must die—'tis well he is in our power.

Fred. The woman then is my friend ?

Orm. What was that !

Ang. He spoke in his sleep—come, we have steeped our hands in blood, and with blood only can we purchase security.

Fred. Horror ! what is it you say ! *[Starting up.*

Ang. You are awake !

Fred. Yes, what would you ?

Ang. I am weary, and come to rest in my own chair—

Fred. And your men—

Ang. They—they have to trim the light yonder at all hours ; you can go *(exit Ormoloff and Maurice, down hold.)* there we'll sleep by each other's side *(seats himself)* what the devil ails my limbs—a cramp like feeling, steals over me—my blood becomes thick and cold—I—

[Falls asleep.

Music, Frederic takes the lamp, draws Angerstoff's sword, looks cautiously about, and is stealing towards the ladder as Maurice and Ormoloff enter from hold, and rush at him with their swords.

Orm. Hold or you die !

Fred. Pursue me not, I insist on quitting the vessel—I know you—I changed the wine, I knew I was betrayed—away, and let me pass.

Both. Never, never ! give up the sword !

Fred. When I no longer possess strength to grasp it, then, and not till then, will I become your victim !

Music, a furious combat—he is nearly overcome, when Mariette, suddenly enters from the cabin, and stands over him, with a brace of Pistols.

PICTURE FORMED.

MARIETTE.

ORMOLOFF.

FREDERIC.

MAURICE.

ANGERSTOFF—*asleep.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A rocky Strand, and Sea by Moonlight—Jack
Junk and Sailors discovered.*

CHORUS.

Push about the grog, boys,
Merry be ashore,
Now the storm is past, boys,
We'll all afloat once more;
In spite of wind and weather,
Ah! who so blithe as we,
We'll joke and laugh together,
At the dangers of the sea.
Here's a hearty swig, boys, to every jolly dog,
Push about the grog, boys, push about the grog.

Jack. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis lucky Ben's cag came afloat after us, or shiver my timbers, but we should all have been drier than pickled herrings, not withstanding our ducking! this has been the devil of a hurricane though, the boat completely upset, and now my lady moon is shining as beautifully as a ship's candle through a cats head.—So so, here comes old Weignstadt with signals of distress hanging out of his cabin windows; what cheer my hearty, what cheer!

Enter WEIGNSTADT, L. H.

Weign. My good friend, you were mistaken, I have been along side the Floating Beacon—my poor boy Fred-eric is not there, he's lost!

Jack. Lost, the devil!—I tell you when we were upset, I saw him swim as manfully as a dolphin, to the Beacon side, and up he was in an instant—I should have followed by the same rope, only it broke you see, and left me to flounder about in the water, till I got hold of a plank that brought me safe ashore, and damme here I am as jovial as ever, aye, and ready too, to give the enemies of old England a drubbing, and drink success to the pretty girls, by sea and by land. [Drinks.]

Weign. What am I to suppose? the Captain, whom I

hailed on board, assured me upon his word, that no one had entered his vessel, except the government men, for many a long year.

Jack. Avast! avast! I don't believe a word on't; he might as well attempt to tell me that there isn't a petticoat aboard.

Weign. A woman on board the Floating Beacon? it cannot be.

Jack. I don't know whether it can be or not, but I know it is! I discovered it through the purser's glass, from the mast head of our sloop, no longer ago than yesterday.

Weign. Such a circumstance is against all law; yet, should the sailor speak the truth, it may account for the man's reluctance to admit strangers—but he so solemnly denied Frederic's presence that—

Jack. Denied it? well, well, I'll just pop along side the lubber, with a little bit of oakum in my fist, and if he dare but to give me the lie, in the same way, I'll teach him to sail under false colors with a vengeance, or don't say my name's Jack Junk—a lie, ha!

Weign. But how to get aboard the Beacon?

Jack. How! why with the use of my grappling irons here, and a rope ladder to be sure

Weign. You know not, that except in cases of distress, the convicts are forbid to admit strangers; their business is merely to warn vessels off the sand banks.

Jack. And isn't mine a case of distress, don't I seek a messmate, and hasn't the rascally poltroon sent me word I lie?—don't I demand justice?

Weign. I'm afraid *justice*, without other interference, will obtain you no entrance aboard the Beacon.

Jack. But I say it shall, if they don't bring my messmate forward, I'll serve him one way or another, for I'll blow the Beacon to the devil!—talk of justice not being able to bring me aboard! I'll let 'em see that I was born in a Christian land, where justice stands on no ceremony at all, no she walks into the poor man's cabin, and the rich man's parlor, without axing leave; and wherever she finds a rogue lays her paws upon him, and be damn'd! A lie, ha—a British sailor lie—fire and fury, I'll knock the fellow down if he were as big as a three decker, and I only the size of a cock boat,—a lie, ha!

Weign. Well, well, compose yourself; good heaven! here comes Christine—my distress is insupportable—how shall I answer her anxious inquiries, only by—

Jack. A lie—a lie, ha!

Weign. My poor child! it will be impossible to—

Jack. Hold your jawing tackle—leave me to settle the matter—mayhap she'll believe what I say—avast, avast!

Enter CHRISTINE, L. H.

Chris. He is not here—Father! where is Frederic! do tell me?

Jack. A lie, ha!

Chris. How!

Jack. Frederic's aboard the Beacon, my lass I'll soon steer him safe ashore,—this lie sticks in my throat most confoundedly.

Chris. No! will you bring him to me—will you indeed!

Jack. Aye, aye, I'll soon slew-him to an anchor in the heaven of your arms, depend on't.

Chris. Dear father this is not jesting, is it?—Frederic is safe—is he safe, father?

Jack. Fire and pitch, I seem to be getting a badish name here, and all through that box'd up lubber, in the Beacon—a lie, ha!

Weign. Yes, child, you may believe honest Jack—he saw Frederic enter the vesse', on the sand bank.

Chris. Gracious providence! hear and accept my heartfelt prayers, and ever, ever be thy especial charge, the poor sea boy amid the wreck of storms—the unfortunate mariner in the tempest's rage.

Jack. That's just what my Poll, said when I parted from her last at Deptford, Jack, snivelled she, looking as sly as an angel and brushing away a tear, with the back of her hand thus; Jack said she, (and then she gave me this here 'bacca box,) so you are going to sail the salt seas—well I hopes as how, when there's a stiff breeze abroad, they'll be a little chirrup aloft to keep watch for the life of poor Jack. Then, dear creature, she sat herself down, on the grass to cry, quite overcome ye see and so I sat down too, and I kissed away her tears, and then I was quite overcome; and what followed, I can't describe. (*Wipes away a tear.*)

However there is no time to be lost, so you Weignstadt go with my comrades to the sloop, state particulars like to the Captain, while I take your boat, and pull away to the Beacon, and if they don't immediately produce the youngster, I'll just ram my fist down their ugly throats!—In case of resistance be on the look out, for signals—that's all, you know my whistle?

Weign. Alas! what should induce them to conceal—

Chris. You alarm me! what—

Jack. Give over—give over! leave me alone to bring the lad ashore, I'll soon find him, I warrant, it won't be the first time I've found a friend in an enemy's locker; so, to sea, to sea—and d'ye mind—look out for signals.

[*Exit all but JUNK and CHRISTINE, L. H.*

Now, my lass, I'll just pop into t'other boat and bring your sweetheart in a whiff.

Chris. I shall be wretched here by myself—even ten minutes of delay, is an age in love's calendar—do pray take me with you to the Beacon.

Jack. O, with all my heart! you are a brave girl, and deserve a husband—so come along, we English sailors are never so happy, as when contributing to the happiness of others, and especially to that of the ladies.

[*Exeunt, R. H.*

SCENE II.—*As scene the 3d, act 1st.*—*Music, ANGERSTOFF and ORMOLOFF discovered.*

Ang. Is the old fisherman gone towards the shore?

Orm. Yes, he turn'd his boat with a heavy heart, as if satisfied that the boy was drowned, and quitted the sand bank in silence.

Ang. What did he call himself?

Orm. Weignstadt.

Ang. Weignstadt,—however it matters not—the boy is completely in our power—no body but Mariette knows of his being here, and if she attempts to open her lips on the subject, why she shares his fate, that's all; are we to live all these years in security, and then be betrayed by a fisherman's foundling! no—no—no? the night watch is nearly up—suppose we extinguish the lanterns.

Orm. The sooner the better I think !

Ang. Yet stay ! not just yet, it may excite suspicion, so come down, and let us be certain our captive is secure, and then take a glass of grog, and to our births—it may prevent mistrust, should any more of these prying fools be on the look out.

Orm. You determine to put an end to the boy.

Ang. Aye, or the consequence will prove—he will put an end to us, and we shall swing for all, at the top of yonder mast; he knows too much of Mariette's story; once ashore, the government men would listen to him. And now I think on't, I'd a strange dream last night.

Orm. Pshaw, you're so superstitious ! why, it was but last week, you fancied you saw the ghost of the man we murdered sixteen years ago—ha, ha !

Ang. You laugh, but I saw him for all that—there—on the level deck, standing in the pale moonlight, his ghastly terrible looks were full upon me !—why—why, remind me of them ?—I like it not.

Orm. Why, captain, you are getting crazed, of late ; you catch it of Mariette, I think—I wish that woman had been at peace, long ago.

Ang. Silence !—is'nt she my wife ?

Orm. Your wife, ha, ha ! O yes ! your wife, but, she hates you, as the devil hates holy water, nevertheless ! however, 'tis the case with most wives I think, I know it was the case with mine, or I had never been sent here, she denounced me to the magistrates, and for what—merely because I robbed a monastery of its plate and rosaries, which she forsooth called sacrilege.— [*Music.*

Ang. Hark ! what's that ?

Enter JUNK and CHRISTINE in a boat, U. E. R. H.

Jack. Aboard, there ! aboard ! what cheer, ho !

Ang. Your business here, what seek ye ?

Jack. The young fellow who came up the side of the Beacon, in the storm.

Ang. When ?

Jack. Come, come, you know ; yo-ho, yo-ho, all hands aboard, yo-yo !

Ang. Silence !—there's no one besides the present company, and a person called Maurice in the vessel.

Chris. Alas! surely Frederic—

Jack. You hear what he says—he tells me to my face, I lie—you said so before—you say I lie, do you see this pictur on my hat?

Ang. Well what of it?

Jack. Why, only that's just to let you know as how I belong to the Eagle sloop! I'm Jack Junk, of Deptford, and if you don't please to deliver up your prisoner, damme I'll pour such a broadside into your upper lights, as shall send you to the devil, twisting and sprawling like a wasp, in a whirlwind.

Ang. I neither care about you, nor your sloop; I am only answerable for what's on board this beacon, to the tyrants of my own nation—and as for your lying, or not, 'tis all the same to me.

Jack. O, ho! then you mean to sneer at my sloop do ye, that's worse than all the rest of your bravado put together—I'll soon let you see—

[*JACK enters on deck with CHRISTINE.*]

Chris. For heaven's sake, be more calm—'tis only Frederic we seek, a young man who was upset in the storm to night.

Ang. He is not here.

Chris. Alas, alas! then I have been deceived, he is lost for ever! O Frederic, Frederic! [*Faints.*]

Jack. (*Holding her.*) Here's a precious to do! here's an upset! I tell you, Christine, all shall be right, only just open your day-lights a few minutes merely to see fair play, and I'll give this lubber such a douser, as shall send him to the bottom in a jiffey.

Chris. I'm better, let us return, come—ha, what is it I discover! that bracelet on the floor? 'tis Frederic's—'tis marked with the name of Malvern!

Jack. I know it—he showed it me, last night!

Chris. Ah! then he must have been here—a fearful thought rushes through my mind—they have murdered him.

Jack. Murdered him, I only wish they might, that's all.

Ang. Away!—or—

Jack. Will you give up your prisoner?

Ang. You have no right here, begone.

Jack. Masts and mainsails! not till I given your honor an English steel pill, yo-ho! yo-ho!

Ang. Miscreant! secure him!

Jack. Yo ho, yo-ho!

[*Music.*

[*Combat.—Jack beats off Angerstoff, Ormolloff enters with a sword, R. H. and Maurice, L. H. they fight with Jack, while Christine hurries into the boat, Jack retreats towards boat also, and draws pistols.*

Jack. Mayhap, you don't know I'm an old cruizer, and not without a bulldog for foreign varment, like you.

Ang. Fire arms, below there!

[*Music, they rush out, R. H.*

Jack. Ah! you may fire, and be damn'd, I'll soon return, and crack your shell about your ears, my fine fish, depend on't, yo ho, yo-ho!

[*Exit, U. E. R. H. with Christine in boat.*

Re-enter ANGERSTOFF, and ORMOLOFF.

Ang. Escaped! run and watch the boat from the lower windows, Maurice—you, Ormolloff, put out the lantern, then they'll founder perhaps on the rocks; and see the moon is setting—out with the lights.

Orm. That's well thought of, now we have only to dispatch the boy, and throw him into the sea, for here's the bracelet, droped out of the girl's hand, and they have no evidence against us.

Ang. That's fortunate, out with the lights.

Orm. 'Tis done!

[*Puts out the lantern.*

Ang. Now below! let us prime with brandy and then—

Orm. To business, ha, ha!

[*Exit down hold.*

Ang. (*Going stops sudden.*) What was that! did it not glide past me again, I saw it, yet there's nothing now,—'twas but the moonshine on the white mast;—out ye distemper'd fancies from my brain, it was not always thus; I grow infirm of mind, while still my purpose is young and ripe, as in its summer moon, so were my thoughts but for these blasts of conscience, which bursts upon me in my feebler hours.—Yon slave was right, why did I save Mariette, my lenity and not her hate, will ruin me!—Ere this I would have stabb'd her while she slept, but then her looks, so pale, so deadly still, seemed like my mother's as

with fleeting breath she pour'd her latest blessing on my head ! O righteous judge ! how have I marred that blessing,—vice led to crime and crime to crime succeeded—but I must not think thus—recollection drives me mad,—wine there, wine there ! Ormoloff !

[*Exit, L. H. 1st E.*

Music.—*Enter MARIETTE, from Cabin with a lamp, L. H.*

Mar. What noise was that ! should it be the government-men, then there's hope, 'tis fortunate I succeeded in forcing back the bolts of my prison, I never felt so strong till now, ah ! some one approaches, (*listens.*) 'tis me he seeks, then I am lost—no, thank heaven, he comes not—dreadful situation ! could I but save the life of this poor boy even at the hazard of my own.

[*Music, as she lifts a trap in the centre and descends.*

Enter ANGERSTOFF, L. H. and ORMOLOFF, from hold.

Ang. Is that you, Ormoloff ?

Orm. Yes !

Ang. Well, did you find Mariette's door secure !

Orm. I did, here's the key.

Ang. That's right, but hadn't you a light in your hand ?

Orm. A light—when ?

Ang. Just now ?

Orm. No !

Ang. I'm sure I saw a light !

Orm. Then it was Maurice, here he comes.

Enter MAURICE from hold with lamp.

Mau. Did you speak ?

Ang. Yes, we can't see in the dark—now lift up the trap door, and let us dispatch our victim, I wish it were done.

Orm. (*Rises to open it.*) 'Tis long since we used this door, its old hinges are incrustated with rust, and will not yield, or else it must be fastened on the inside.

Ang. Fastened, that's impossible, but it doesn't matter, the boy cannot resist our attack, so let us take a sup of brandy to animate us, and then rush upon him by the iron door below,—come—come—despatch. [*Exit down hold.*

SCENE III.—*The Hold, lighted from the ceiling by an iron lamp, bed partially concealed by a tattered curtain in a recess, R. H. a low grated door, L. H.* [Music.

(*Frederic, kneeling.*)

Fred. What a miserable fate is mine! ere I knew the blessings of existence, I was deprived of my only parents by calamity; and now that I have attempted to discover them I am pursued by a more rigorous destiny; must I become the prey of fiends; more remorseless than wolves? Beloved Christine! good old Weignstadt! why did I leave your hospitable cottage, your fond endearments!—to perish in the dark inexplicable mystery—no ray of escape!—no hope—

Music, a pannel opens behind the bed, through which MARIETTE, enters.

Mar. Suppress your astonishment, only this one dreadful moment is spared us! the bracelet you spoke of, where is it?

Fred. What sordid avarice! yet she has proved herself a friend—the bracelet! why do you ask for it?

Mar. In pity, delay not an instant!

Fred. Know you not, they have robbed me of it, should you wish to restore it to me—'tis—

Mar. Of red Coral!

Fred. True—and the name it contains—

Mar. Engraved on an onyx—

Fred. You have found it then?

Mar. No, no! but I have seen it oft, in happier days, let me gaze on thee a moment—sixteen years since, you were wreck'd on the eve of St. Mark.

Fred. Yes! you remember the wreck?

Mar. O, too well I remember it—it was full of nameless horror for me—methinks even now, I hear the roaring of that night's tempest! again the forked lightnings seem to warp my brain! 'till that night, boy, thou hadst a father, a fond doating, noble father!

Fred. Gracious powers!—you know then—speak!—he perished in the storm!

Mar. True he perished in the storm, but not by the

overwhelming deluge, no!—long he battled with the furious breakers, and still upheld his senseless wife, till he bore her in safety to this detested Beacon—here he sought protection of men, he had wealth about his person, he sought protection and they gave him—

Fred. What!

Mar. A dagger!

Fred. A dagger! monsters! and my mother!—

Mar. Thy mother lives!

Fred. Lives! and cannot I one moment behold her, one moment! gracious heaven!

Mar. It was her hand placed that bracelet round thy neck, ah! little did she then think how soon the merciless waves would dash thee from her arms, she lives perhaps to bear thy curses to her grave, for know, and let the thought madden thee, as it has done me—she is now the wife of thy father's murderer!

Fred. Impossible!

Mar. Aye! so heaven and nature might alike declare; death had been a paradise, slavery, want, beggary, an empire of bliss compared to the hell of tortures she was doomed to sustain,—she heard the last untimely groan of her husband to whom her devoted soul adhered: like sea-tossed wretches, clinging to one lone raft on ocean's broadest depth, yet she died not;—her wits wandered, but existence still remained! she lived the slave of these three wretches who now seek thy life; tears were useless, to avert a dreadful fate, and to save herself from the brutal insults of two ruffians, she consented to become the wife of a third even more relentless; a mock ceremony was performed by Ormoloff, who calls himself the Beacon priest,—it was done to quiet the reason of the devoted mother, but it plunged her still deeper in despair, deeper into phrenzy,—curse her, curse her! that she may die!

Fred. Alas, alas! and wherefore should I curse her, no, no! though unparalleled adversity hath sunk her to the wretches bitterest portion, her soul may still be unstained and pure as mountain ice! O, that I could clasp her for an instant in these extended arms, and when I ceased to love, to honour, and to cherish her, it must be with the last throb my own grateful heart!

Mar. (*Rushing into his arms.*) My child, my child! I am thy wretched mother!

Fred. Thou—thou—heaven's blessings on thee, dearest, —dearest mother!

Mar. Providence, this one moment of delight, amply repays me sixteen years of suffering!

Fred. They approach! we will die in each other's arms!

Mar. But not here, through yonder pannel, which conducts to a trap, opening to the deck of the vessel, a fatal entrance constructed by your father's assassins for the purpose of aiding scenes of blood, too often acted in this dreadful place, whenever fate has thrown, into their power, victims like him, worthy their remorseless avarice—through that pannel we may escape—stay a moment I'll draw back the bolt and listen. [*Exit with lamp at door.*]

Fred. If I could but possess myself of a sword, with my best strength—

Re-enter MARIETTE.

Mar. Alas, as I lifted up the trap door some one rushed towards the spot, I am pursued, 'tis the light which directs the intruder.

[*Fredric blows out the light, Music as they pass behind the iron door.*]

Enter ANGERSTOFF and ORMLOFF through door, followed by MAURICE with a light, FREDERIC, (who is behind door) blows out light, and escapes with MARIETTE.

Ang. How now 'you've put out the light?

Orm. It was the sea wind, rushing through the door.

Ang. We'll go and rekindle it?

ORMLOFF exits and re-enters at door with light.

Have you closed the door?

Orm. Yes, there—[*Shuts the door.*]

Ang. Where's the captive?

Orm. On the bed—see; he shakes the curtains now—

Ang. Who—who's to strike the blow?

Mau. and Orm. All! our danger is mutual.

Ang. Well, well, now!

[*Music, as he hurries towards the place, the curtain is rent down and JACK JUNK, with a party of Marines, enter.*

Jack. I said I'd batter your house about your ears, you precious rascals—so have at you.

Ang. Confusion, betrayed?—fly, fly,—

[*They rush out at the door.*

Jack. Ha! they've fairly given us the slip, they can't escape though, for I haul'd up the cabin ladder again—so after them lads, after them—the door fast? this way then, or they'll come the black hole with us, this way—but where's Frederic, I wonder—I'm sure I heard him within hail—yo-ho, Frederic! yo-ho! [*Exeunt through pannel.*]

SCENE THE LAST.

Same as the second with the lights out, and ladder up.

Enter MARIETTE and FREDERIC, from cabin.

Fred. Come dear mother, let us fly, let us throw a plank into the sea, and trust to providence.

Mar. Our pursuers are at hand—what will become of us,—we must perish—for myself death were nothing, but to witness thy destruction!—till now I never knew the climax of misery, my son—my son!

Fred. Must we then untimely mingle our dying blood together, in the solitudes of the ocean,—unpitied, unrevenged—comfort, dearest mother,—we have met, we embrace each other tenderly—let us even for that be grateful.

Mar. Frederic—Frederic!

Music, as she rushes into his arms, ANGERSTOFF, MAURICE, and ORMOLOV enter from cabin.

Ang. Destruction to Mariette,—the trait'ress shall not escape!

Fred. Approach then, monsters! and strike your victim in the arms of her son!—we are prepared to die!

Music, as they rush towards MARIETTE, JACK JUNK and followers enter, S. E. R. H.

Jack. Who the devil wants you to die,—nobody shall die here—but these rascals,—a broadside here.

Music, they fire, ANGERSTOFF and party are killed, the vessel fired—picture formed, three cheers, Eagle sloop comes in sight with WEIGNSTADT, CHRISTINE, &c. &c.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

MARINES.

FREDERICK.

MARIETTE.

JACK.

ORMOLOFF.

ANGERSTOFF.¹

MAURICE.

THE END.



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